

# Parsha Pearls

FROM THE WORDS OF THE GEDOLIM

Bo 5769

**“And they baked the dough that they took out of Egypt, cakes of matza, not leavened bread, for they were driven out of Egypt, and they could not tarry...” (12:39)**

The Ohr Hachaim Hakadosh (on Shemos 3:7) gives his famous explanation of why Israel had to leave Egypt in such a hurry: because they had already entered 49 gates of defilement, and if they had stayed any longer, they would have entered the 50<sup>th</sup> gate, the point of no return. This is why the Hagada says, “If the Holy One, blessed is He, had not taken out our fathers from Egypt, we, our children and our children’s children would be enslaved to Pharaoh in Egypt.” And this is what G-d meant when He said to Moshe at the Burning Bush, “I have certainly seen the poverty of My people... and I have come down to save them from Egypt” (Shemos 3:7). He saw that their spiritual poverty had reached such a level that soon, if they would stay any longer, they would never be able to leave.

The Ohr Hachaim (3:8) asks further: why then did G-d wait till the last minute? He should have taken Israel out earlier, and then they would not have had to hurry. He answers that the purpose of exile is to purify the sparks of holiness that are absorbed in the 50 gates of defilement. In Egypt they were only expected to reach 49 out of those 50 gates, and therefore they were only given 49 gates of understanding. If they had left early, they would have missed purifying some of those sparks.

However, he says, G-d promised that in the future He will grant us understanding of the Torah on the 50<sup>th</sup> level. We will gain this understanding through the exiles, and especially through the last exile. Then and only then will we be able to purify the 50<sup>th</sup> gate of defilement. But in Egypt, when the Jews did not yet have the Torah and could not reach the 50<sup>th</sup> gate of understanding, it would have been dangerous for them to enter the 50<sup>th</sup> gate of defilement.

The Chazon Ish once said to Rabbi Ahron Katzenellenboigen, “The reason Jews are so confused by the Zionist state is that the state is the 50 gates of defilement. To overcome this we need the 50 gates of holiness. Since the 50<sup>th</sup> gate of holiness is hidden from us, therefore the confusion is so great, for we cannot stand up against the 50 gates of defilement of the state.” (Mishkenos Haro'im p. 1195)

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